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THIRTY NEW POEMS



# THIRTY NEW POEMS

BY  
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AUTHOR OF  
"EXODUS, AND OTHER POEMS," ETC.

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*All the songs here sung,  
All the stories told,  
Are but curtains hung  
Before the old  
Visionary shrine  
Of things divine,*

*—But the earthly myth,  
But the reflex pale,  
But the tune wherewith  
Things behind the veil  
May be sung  
In our mortal tongue.*

*So that, as a dream  
Radiant on the dusk,  
Sudden light may stream  
Through this mortal husk  
And the soul's desire  
Reach its fire.*

## NOTE

SOME of these poems have appeared in *The Academy*, *The British Review*, *The British Weekly*, *The New Statesman*, *The Poetry Review*, *Poetry* (Chicago), and *The Quest*.

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M. A.

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## TAMAR

TAMAR in her halls of stone  
Hid in snow-bound wastes where lone  
Icy summits towered above,  
Languished for the deathless love.  
Her eyes shone darkly with the fires  
Of unappeasable desires,  
And passion's fearful tyranny  
Made her face like ivory.

Every wanderer she saw,  
Tamar beckoned to her door,  
Waved her scarf to lure him in  
And search the godhead through the sin :  
Hoping still despairingly,  
Fiercely, wildly, each was He  
Who out of the vastness roves  
Bringing her the love of loves.

Mile on mile beneath her sight  
Rolling desert, stark and white,  
Flung in formless chaos lay,  
Merged from white to deathly grey,  
And lazily and hopelessly  
Snow came drifting from the sky.  
Joy, by no glad colour fed,  
Withered up, and song fell dead  
In the parched air : and Tamar stood  
Stunned, appalled, a thing of wood ;  
Till, a thrall to frenzied dread,  
She felt white death upon her rush  
In the terror of the hush  
—Felt her throat and heart grow numb  
And her soul, close-muffled, dumb,  
Smothered under mounds of cold,  
Icy fold on icy fold.  
And in terror Tamar cried :  
“ Shut the day out. Draw the wide  
Crimson curtains. Fill the hall  
Full of ruddy fire, and call  
The singers and the dancers in.”  
So, with flaring lights and din  
Of harps and timbrels and the strife  
Of bickering shapes and colours, life

Surged into her heart again  
And her soul forgot its pain.

Small her respite ! Not for long  
Pleasure's changing siren-song  
Lulls the memory of the soul.  
Soon the old eternal dole  
Clamoured at her spirit's gate,  
And with eyes grown keen with hate  
Back she drove the glittering show :  
Dancers, singers, trembling go  
Huddled from her presence. She,  
Lone upon her balcony,  
Like an eagle, hungry, fierce,  
Stands again, with eyes that pierce  
Blinding wastes for one that roves  
Bringing her the love of loves.  
And lo, her urgent vision traced  
Lone life moving on the waste,  
Black and tiny as a fly,  
A point in the immensity.  
Mute she watched it from her tower  
Growing larger hour by hour :  
Watched it coming, watched it grow  
To a pilgrim : far below

He stood and the gaunt, snow-stricken air  
Whispered of darkness and despair.  
But Tamar at her turret door  
Stirred and with eager soul once more  
Felt the endless hunt begin  
And, thrilled with hope but sick with sin,  
Waved her scarf to lure him in.

Slaves received him from the doors  
Into glimmering corridors ;  
Bathed in water, perfumed, warm,  
His body wearied by the storm ;  
Clothed him in a robe of blue  
Wrought with crimson dragons ; drew  
Golden combs along his hair ;  
Set on every finger rare  
Jewels thieved from buried kings,  
And round his ankles, golden rings ;  
Turbaned him in gold and green,  
For the pleasure of the queen.

All night long the reeling rout  
Danced to shut the vastness out,  
Danced to blind the wistful soul  
To the vision of her goal.



All night long without a halt  
Rang beneath the crimson vault  
Stir and beat of a hundred feet  
In the loom of dance that, shifting, fleet,  
Its web of sumptuous colour wove;  
And the driven slaves unresting strove,  
Urging on the maddened throng  
With stinging cymbal, beaten gong;  
While the jewelled censers hover  
Over Tamar and her lover.  
But at last, when wan night seemed  
To stir a little as she dreamed,  
And the burning spices failed and died  
To powdery ashes, and, outside,  
Myriads of glittering icy spars  
Gleamed beneath the freezing stars,  
Weariness upon them came  
And in Tamar's eyes the flame  
Shrank and faded, and she raised  
Looks with chill revulsion dazed  
To her lover's face, and lo,  
It was empty, hollow. So,  
Wounded by the spirit's sword,  
Lesser wonders grow abhorred,

Tamar made a little sign  
As she pledged him in the wine,  
And the dancers ringed him round  
And to the stinging timbrels' sound  
Urged him laughing to a door.  
Far beneath in endless roar  
Echoed the icy torrent's call,  
And icy air winged round the hall.  
Then the slaves in ghastly dance  
—Ah, the white horror of his glance—  
Flung him backwards. The ravine  
Howled beneath: the stark moon's sheen  
Lusted many a plunging wave,  
And shed a wonder o'er his grave.

Shut away the midnight chill  
And let each gusty torch grow still.  
Evermore must there remain  
The unassuaged immortal pain.  
And of him? A tragic, rent  
Memory of disillusionment.  
But the frosty stars of morn  
Glimmered on the tower forlorn  
Where again pale Tamar faced  
Grimly the uncharted waste.

And to the icy stars of eve  
Round another pilgrim heave  
Void grey hollow and stark mound  
Desolate from bound to bound.  
And from the stricken mountain-side  
Tamar, pale and hungry-eyed,  
Feeling in her bosom ope  
Doors of old insurgent hope  
And the endless hunt begin,  
Waves her scarf to lure him in.

\* \* \* \* \*

Fierce tiger ravening on thy way  
In quest of still diviner prey !  
Eagle, who from proudest flight  
Still hungers for the spirit's height !  
Stern pilgrim ! Uncompassionate lover  
Who, raging onwards to discover  
Eternal Love, with quenchless lust  
Flings ancient loves into the dust !  
O rose, whose boughs in patience climb  
Flowerlessly the rungs of Time,  
Flowerless till thy golden flowers  
Fill with many hanging bowers

All the close of Paradise !  
Move, O Soul, with steadfast eyes  
Strong to pierce the lures which blind,  
Tirelessly enduring, wise.  
Keen as panther after hind,  
Forge thy fierce unswerving way  
To the everlasting prey.

## THE PROCESSION

PAVEN grey,  
The triumphal way  
Clove the plain like a javelin-head,  
Circled the hill in a broad progression  
And up to the white acropolis sped :  
Waiting the feet of the great procession  
It lay to the noonday sun outspread.

Ninety columns of rough-hewn granite  
Edged the way in a lordly line—  
Rocks hewn down  
From a mountain-crown  
In giant ages by kings divine :  
Each—the leap of a man might span it—  
Towered as high as a forest pine,

Dust looms grey

Down the pillared way,

Foaming to gold where the sun breaks in.

They are coming. The noise grows deeper and  
duller :

See, through the great blocks, out and in,

Flashes of sharp and insolent colour

Leap through the crowd with the marching din.

The rumour thickens : a fear ! a wonder !

Neighings and shouts and the tramp that casts

Like a smoking pyre

The white dust higher !

The pikes are clustered like harbour-masts ;

The chariot-wheels on the pavement thunder,

And the horses leap at the trumpet-blasts.

The heralds troop

In a serried group :

The long, bright shafts of their trumpets rise

Like sunrays over a mountain shooting ;

Fire on the bright brass flashes and flies,

Fierce as the raucous music bruited

Triumph up to the holloing skies.

Banners wavered with lazy flappings  
Over the tall crests dancing there.

Like beasts afraid

The long horns brayed

Harsh through the hot and dusty air,  
And the greens and scarlets of robes and trappings  
Threaded the rocks with a sultry glare.

Now they strode

Up the mounting road,

Their rich barbaric music sounding  
Tawny and fierce, till it shrank and paled  
As the carolling cohort dwindled, rounding  
The curve of the hill, and its echoes hailed  
Far, from the loftier crags rebounding.

Flames from the foundering sun-ship leaping  
Kindle the folds of its cloudy sails :

And the throngs that toil

Up the far slopes coil

Like the gleaming rings of a snake that trails,  
On the breast and neck of the charmer sleeping,  
The changing splendour of burnished scales.

In the phoenix-glow

Of the sunset, lo

A crown of fire were the far-seen crowds,

High on the terraced summit swaying.

The hill that rose to the evening clouds

Stood like an altar where, after the slaying,

Flames of the offering leapt and bowed.

And over that ocean of men impassioned,

Men whom the current of life bore high,

In the great repose

Of godhead rose,

Throned august in the golden sky,

From the pure white splendour of marble fashioned,

The porch of the Temple of Victory.



## PHAETHON

PHAETHON, son of daylight's Charioteer,  
Lordly, without a peer  
In wrestling-schools, feeling swift youth aspire  
Through all his limbs like fire,  
Longed for immortal labour to content  
The power within him pent.  
Therefore he stood before his father's chair  
And poured his burning prayer.  
"O Father, hear me : by thy golden brow,  
Grant me this favour now,  
For I am weary of all dull toils that Earth  
Gives men of mortal birth.  
Lord, I would guide upon its sapphire way  
The Chariot of the Day."  
And long the boy besieged his father's ears,  
Deriding all his fears,  
Showing his tightened muscles with a smile,  
So striving to beguile

The god's reluctance. "See, such thews as mine  
Were made for toils divine."

Till, wearied at the ending of the day,  
Apollo nodded yea.

The boy stretched joyous arms above his head  
And crept content to bed.

And as the moon drew in her silver flame  
His happy sisters came,  
Took down the gleaming harness from the wall,  
Led out the steeds from stall

And, lighted by a torch of burning tar,  
They yoked them to the car :

Then round the sleeping boy watched silently  
Until the hour should be.

But when pale Night drooped in her dying  
trance

He rose with eager glance,  
Flung back his purple chlamys joyously,  
Shaking his bare arms free ;

Then up into the sun-car smouldering

He stepped with careless swing  
And gathered up above the gleaming manes  
The bunch of golden reins.

The stamping team, straining each tautened trace,  
Sprang forth into void space.

Earth from her slumber stirred and felt the-morn  
Break through her dreams forlorn,  
Saw through the fissures of rent darkness run  
The lava of the sun  
And gild beneath her hood of dusky vair  
Grey Twilight's streaming hair.

But upward o'er the vaporous ways they clomb;  
The golden misty foam  
Curled back from pawing hooves and ardent wheels,  
As round the plunging keels  
Of Tyrian ships the salt Ægean spray  
Leaps at the water's sway.  
Swifter they mounted through the misty whirl  
O'er fields of furrowed pearl,  
Through cloudy opal gorges, hills whose heights  
Smouldered with lustrous lights  
Like Tuscan slopes with fields of sainfoin rosed,  
Past islands that reposed  
Like violet-beds in lakes of coolest green  
Far-sweeping and serene.

So did the radiance of the mounting car  
Shed loveliness afar  
Among the formless wastes of desert air,  
Waking Elysium there.  
And he that drove—the gold-haired charioteer—  
With joy that quelled all fear  
Grasping the reins with every muscle strained,  
Still in his boy's heart feigned  
To guide the steeds that with resistless force  
Spurning the daily course,  
Plunged up and down across the fields of air  
And scorched with tropic glare  
Earth's highlands—wrecked her piny mountain-  
spires  
With devastating fires ;  
Then, by a sudden lust for labour driven,  
Leapt towards the blue of heaven.  
But as the chariot o'er the zenith hove,  
He felt the power of Jove,  
For one immortal instant knew the might,  
Throned in sublimest height,  
Of watching Earth in terror far below  
Expect its weal or woe  
Slave-like from him. The boy stood there a god,  
The world beneath his nod.

Yea, more than god, for a diviner flame  
Shot through his mortal frame  
Than ever thrilled the gods who dwell serene,  
Unmoved by joy or teen  
Or that strong ferment, purging sin away,  
Of growth and of decay.  
For he, a mortal urged before the strife  
Of hope and growing life,  
Had sounded all the rich ascending chime  
From earthly to sublime,—  
Transcended all the bounds of mortal state  
And snapped the laws of Fate.  
Though God sent forth his retribution grim  
What mattered it to him?  
What matter if the choking hand of death  
Should stop his eager breath  
Now, when no lust for some untrodden goal  
Lured-on his hunting soul;  
Now, when no more lay hid for him the seven  
Mysteries of Earth and Heaven?  
His soul had known more noble, vivid things  
Than poets and ancient kings;  
For not by length but richness of its days  
Man's life earns power and praise.

Therefore with all life's fullness satisfied  
He stood in steadfast pride  
And, slowly smiling, saw without alarm  
God lift his awful arm.

Children of Earth in dread beheld above  
Black cloudy galleons move  
To rumorous war—felt, like a whirring flail,  
Lightning and wind and hail  
Burst on the vineyards and the fruitful fields  
Heavy with autumn yields.  
The forest like a labouring vessel heaves  
And hosts of storm-stripped leaves  
Whirl from the boughs, and branches, riven back,  
Snap at the wind's attack.  
The herds that rove on grassy hill and mead  
Scattering in wild stampede,  
With bellowing fill the tempest's interspace;  
And men in terror race  
To groves and temple-courts, to offer there  
Burnt sacrifice and prayer.

High on the flashing axle of the storm  
One saw a shining form

Spring heavenwards, heard his last exultant cry  
    Leap through the shivering sky,  
As eagle-like he welcomed for a guest  
    God's lightning to his breast.

Out of the tumult of a wrathful heaven  
    The corpse fell thunder-riven  
And plunged into the streams impetuous  
    Of swift Eridanus.



## THE DANCER

HERE on this hill I stand  
Breathing alone, and around on every hand  
The things of the world, separate, lonely, divided,  
—Grass on the slopes green-sided,  
Browsing herds and the oaks and streams and rocks,  
Women and men on the farms, white clouds above—  
Live each their alien life that mocks  
The beating heart of Love  
That would make of all the worlds one pulse of  
delight,  
One pure, unsevered being, like water or light.

Standing alone and seeing  
This world of stubborn creatures, each  
Prisoned in its material form from reach  
Of universal joy, I should go crazed  
With loneliness intolerable,  
Had I not the secret spell  
To wrap them in flame, to catch them up amazed  
Into a holocaust of being.



Now let the dance begin.

From the soul's secret places I release

The rhythm that shall not cease

Till earth and sea and all the stars are kin.

I move. With arms that like an eagle hover

I circle slowly, solemnly. The air,

Stirred from its peace, clings round me like a lover.

Slowly the things of earth begin to share

My swirling motion. Heavily every tree

Puts off its ancient immobility

As, when the miller frees the hissing race,

Under its urgent speed the lumbering wheel

Slowly, reluctantly begins to heel,

Conquering the weight of sloth and gathering pace.

My whirling quickens, till the mass

Of every tree puts off its separate form

And flowing on the air like streaming grass

Flares backward on its going in a storm

Of flying green. I am become the core

Of a great vortex. Every rocky mound

Leaps from its lone existence, melts, is drowned

In fluid life, ringing my dancing-floor

With a transparent wall, wherethrough I see  
The valley-farms and pastures and far hills  
Caught into the current of my ecstasy

Whose widening whirlpool fills  
Unmeasured space. Peninsulas and sounds,  
Oceans and islands and the shining mounds  
Of golden cloud dissolve to swimming streams  
Of blue and gold. Mountain and continent,  
Waked from the death of their dividuous dreams  
Grow live with rapturous courage to be blent

And passionately borne along  
Into this ecstasy of speed and song.

Now is the consummation. Furthest stars,  
Remotest constellations of dead space,

Forget the pride that bars  
Divine escape and leap into the race  
That floods all planes of being and devours  
All isolation. Life entire is merged  
Into my single spirit, which spreads and towers  
Flame-like and fountain-like, an essence purged  
Of all reluctance. I, the song that rings  
Above all singing: I, the fire that glows

Beyond all fire : the love whose brooding wings  
Cover all loves forever : I, the throes  
Of laughter unexhausted : I, the Seeing  
And the thing seen : the servant and the lord :  
The burning lover and the love adored ;  
Sing the divine exhaustless song of Being,  
Flame-song and fountain-song of the tameless  
power  
Of joy which is the germ and branch and flower  
Of all existence.

Then, upon the height  
Of towering rapture, having sudden will  
To taste my power, I check the spirit's flight,  
Slacken, stop short. Life like a spinning-top  
Reels sideways, loses poise, and races  
In dying whirls. All things grow dense and drop,  
Separate, still,  
Into their ancient places.

## THE LAST MAN

OUT of a sleep of a thousand centuries  
An angel woke to ancient memories  
Of earth and man and Eden, and he turned  
And o'er the bars of space his vision burned  
Until the world rose clear beneath him there.  
Golden with August sunlight was the air,  
And wind hissed softly in the green secrecies  
Of heaving elms and fluttered above the seas,  
Whipping the spray to tongues of rainbow flame;  
But nowhere any man or woman came.  
And much he wondered, seeing by sure advance  
Nature in ancient, proud luxuriance  
—A panther in the jungle, a prowling thing—  
Slowly, stealthily recovering  
Her old domain: with branches serpentine,  
With thongs of bramble, with a smothering twine  
Of great-thewed ivy, throttling, tearing down  
Man's proud imaginings. The towering town,

Cathedrals built to be God's vaulted throne  
Like high fantastic forests turned to stone,  
Old palaces deep-quarried from the earth,  
Lapsed slowly back to her who gave them birth.  
Idle was everything that man had made :  
Ovens and factories spawned no angry shade  
To quench the blue : their slender chimneys reared  
Pure, smokeless shafts like minarets ensphered  
In rosy air, and overwhelming tides  
Of muffling ivy clambered up the sides  
And loosed the slating from the warehouse roofs,  
And wreathing vines and roses wove their woofs  
On rotting shed and church and empty street.  
Still squares lay deep in grass : no sound of  
feet  
Rang on the pavements, but between the flags  
Rank toadstools thrust their heads, and spongy  
quags  
Devoured the roads that showed like healing sores  
Reclothed in healthy grass. The marble floors  
Of galleries and museums heaved in mounds  
Like ruined graveyards, echoing to the sounds  
Of jackdaws. Offices stood blind and crumbling,  
And railway-stations desolate save for the mumbling

In the warm meadowsweet of roving bees.  
And everywhere the gardens, orchards, leas  
Were turned to matted jungles. Herds and flocks,  
Once tamed by men, ran wild among the rocks;  
Yea, all that men had won laboriously  
Returned to the old Earth-Mother's fealty,  
And wildness prospered over hills and plains.

And then he heard a cracking in the canes  
That edged a green lagoon. The slim wands  
shook

And leant apart, and one with slow side-look  
Stepped out and slowly climbed the rising ground.

A ragged woollen garment wrapped him round :  
His beard and hair were matted as the dry  
Grey lichen on a beech-bole. Painfully  
But patient-eyed, courageous to endure,  
He sought a quiet place to die secure  
From beasts and snaring thorns; so climbed the hill  
And gained the crest and stood there very still.  
He was the last of Men, that tyrant race  
Whom outraged Nature drove from Earth's scarred  
face.



There on the sunny crest, lonely and dumb,  
He stood and waited till the end should come.  
And the angel saw that this was Eden's crest  
Where Eve and Adam rose at God's behest  
Long æons ago. But that belated one  
Began to mutter out his thoughts alone :

“ So all is over. As a mountain spring  
Bubbling and sparkling, an immortal thing,  
Dries, in one August hour consumed ; so we,  
Our works and all this passionate ecstasy  
Of living, loving, hating, sink beneath  
The reconciling waveless calm of death.  
O terrible equality, decreed  
By brute Compulsion ! So our every deed,  
Our heroisms and agonies, have evolved  
Like figures in a dance,—equation solved  
Under one fatal law ; one law for all,  
Man's glory and the moss upon the wall.”  
And great in wrath, he set his heart to curse  
The teeming earth and Nature, eyeless nurse,  
Who guides our way through evil and through  
good  
To fill the needy mouth of Death with food.

But lo, an opening rose before his eyes  
Stirred in the scented wind of Paradise :  
Her crimson beauty snared his angry heart  
And anger thawed, and through the barren smart  
Of hate, he felt like early blossoms press  
The ancient ecstasy of loveliness.  
Through golden evening, like an eastern sage,  
He pondered o'er the rose who, for no wage,  
For no dull purpose of utility,  
Delights to bloom and wither and to be.  
A passing loveliness, a radiant health,  
Rich with the soul's unmerchutable wealth.  
And then he spoke :—" Yea, 'tis enough to grow,  
To feel great passions stir us and to know  
Power through defeats and sorrows ; to create  
Beauty and nobleness. For surely Fate  
Is child of Time and Space whose little reach  
Touches not Spirit, nor in Spirit's speech  
Are any words for these, for Spirit exceeds  
The scope of things material, nor heeds  
The ways of memory and oblivion  
Or transience and survival : all are gone,  
Straws on a spate. Therefore I turn again  
Serene into the dust, for, last of Men,



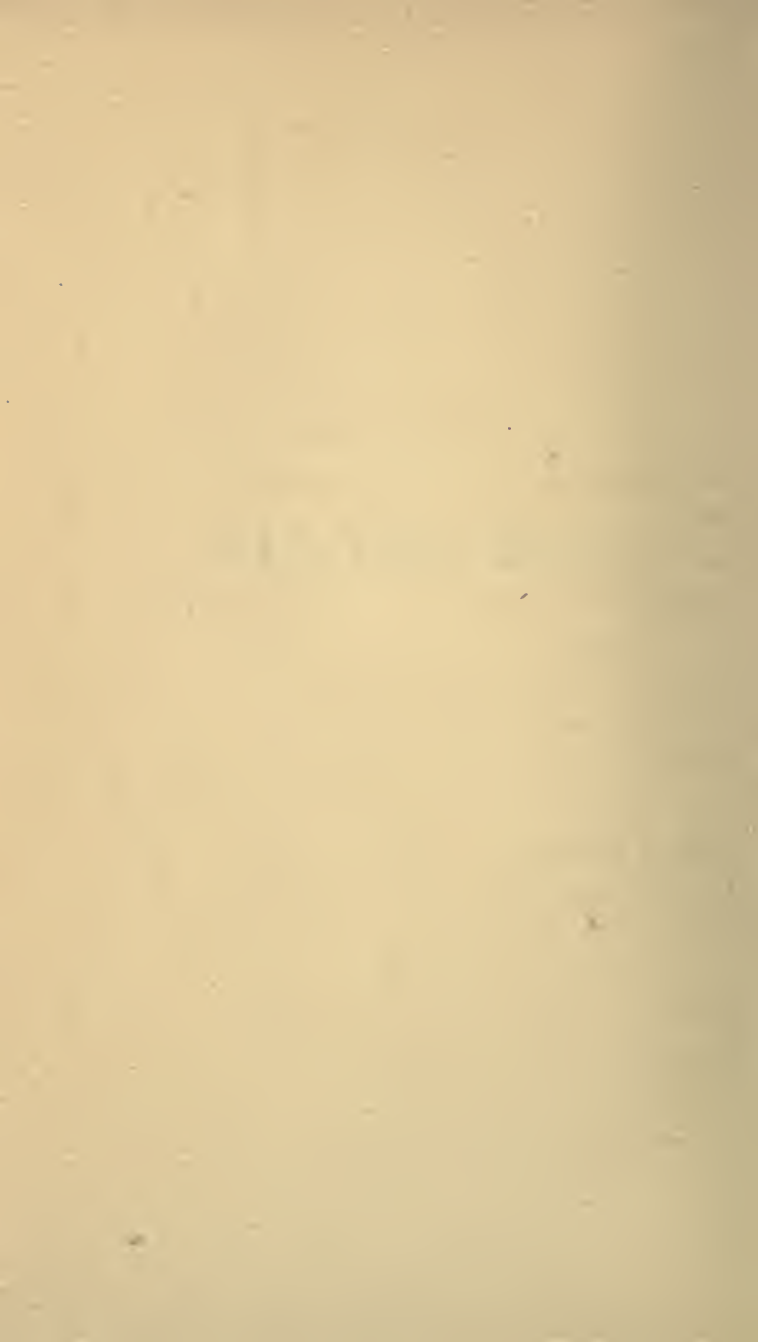
Here in the ancient Eden I have stood  
And viewed man's life and seen that it was good."

O blackened trunk of a tempest-ruined tree !  
O monument to dead nobility !  
Alone and brooding far into the night  
The figure stood in darkness on the height,  
—Lone, adamantine image, dumb and gaunt.  
The owls were loud about their ancient haunt,  
And nightingales in forests far behind  
Called to the buried passions of mankind.

And he who leaned across the bars of space  
Heard all and wept and turned away his face.  
And soon it was forgotten that on the crust  
Of one small mote in the swarming starry dust  
A fever spread, which for a little span  
Flourished and waned and bore the name of Man.



SEVEN LOVE POEMS



## DISCOVERY

ANOTHER autumn dies, and I remember  
How she and I together through the town,  
In the chill desolation of November,  
Passed lighted panes and alleys haggard and  
bleak

And streets rain-weary, dumb;  
Until, when we were come  
To where our ways diverged, we stopped to  
speak

Under a street-lamp. But, as I looked down,  
I found her face turned up and looking at me :  
Then sudden brightness leapt across the dusk  
And every binding husk

Fell back; and life went towering up  
Like lighted spirit in a cup,  
Quiveringly, exultingly,  
Into a blossom of wild flame.

And I, like one sprung into sudden fame,  
Through the dead streets walked wonderfully apart,  
Feeling my ancient fetters broken asunder

And body, brain, and heart  
Radiant amid this new-created wonder.

## BODY AND SPIRIT

IN the wrapt silence of the green midnight,  
—Dead, save that in the height  
Stars moved : still, save that fell  
Timid lisp of leaves that awake and shiver—  
The eternal lapse of time, grown audible,  
Rose up into my hearing like a knell,  
Exhaustless, large, sustained : and in that river  
I knew myself grey driftwood rolled along  
In loneliness forever.

But it was not for long,  
For soon Love's knowledge like a golden gong  
Rang flaming through my spirit, and time was  
nought,  
And life and death, earth and the stars were  
caught  
Suddenly into a holocaust of song.

We who alone are wise  
Seeing we have the sign to exorcize  
This ghost of desolation, let us tend  
    Love's fire until the end :  
So shall this mystery of living be  
No more the ebbing of a restless sea,  
Flight of a fretful bat which never settles,  
Whirled dust in windy vaults that never reposes :  
Not these, but a pilgrimage delighted, wise,  
Through the translucent dawns of a thousand petals  
Into the golden heart of the Rose of roses.

Wherefore be patient, tender, wise, forgiving,  
    In this strange task of living ;  
For if we fail each other each will be  
Grey driftwood lapsing to the bitter sea.



## FLAME

ONLY the fire of love can fuse and burn  
This solid world to spirit. But we two  
Have caught love back by the escaping wing,  
Therefore shall life be perfect; for our eyes  
Are opened and our stooping souls stand up  
Full-statured under the roofless heaven of Love.

Open the doors of Infinity : bring forth  
The golden cups and pour the kindling wine.  
So shall we drink and see, with hearts made  
    wise,  
Dead rocks and metals tense with whirling life;  
Rivers and seas and meres and the streaming  
    winds  
Sure, ceremonial move to the pulse of change;  
Yea, spirit shall see how from the teeming  
    earth

Waving trees and the beautiful lives of flowers

Flicker like tongues of fire;

Shall see how man, the bright untamable spirit,

Leaps and aspires and burns upward for ever,

A quivering flame, beyond the flaming stars.

## A LAMENT FOR LOVE

O CITY of Love made desolate and forsaken,  
Thy towers of soaring joy discrowned and broken,  
Thy broad and shining pavements torn and  
    shattered,  
Thy fruits untimely from the tall trees shaken !  
No more from airy belfrys shall be woken  
Ecstatic harmonies at noon that scattered  
Rapture of life through all the streets and houses.  
No more the doves of Venus perch and flutter  
Among thy happy roofs, nor sun is golden  
On garden-walls, nor Love himself carouses  
In thy red banquet-hall. But silence utter,  
Darkness and desolation, and the olden  
Wordless complaint for lovely things defeated,  
Beauty destroyed, and Love slain ruthlessly.  
And in the world the ancient sigh repeated,  
And in my heart the end of life for me.

## GOLD AND ASHES

I, FROM Love's servitude escaped at length,  
Closed the door of my heart and ceased from care.  
"Never again," I said, "shall his golden snare  
Bind my heart and cripple its soaring strength."  
Knowing not what I said, for soon thereafter  
Joy was dead. Unheard was the ageless laughter  
Of winds and waters; beauty paled on the breast  
Of the loveless earth, and the light of eternal  
wonder  
Shrank in the moon till the waves were dark there-  
under :  
And lo, I held in my hands the guerdon of rest,  
And it was a bowl of ashes.

O better to love, though stung by a thousand  
lashes,  
Wounded by woes without number  
And scorn and abuse,  
Than live forever in peace like passionless lumber  
Grey with the dust of disuse.

## AT THE END

THROUGH a twilight of fading violets and dead  
roses

Lo my belov'd returning  
With shining eyes and the old remembered smile :  
And as a rose with the passion of new life  
burning

Slowly, deliciously every petal uncloses,  
Deep in my heart some sweet thing stirred. The  
while,

Trembling I stood, shaken with fear and wonder,  
And round us ghosts of all long-departed lovers  
Broke to a pæan, as we, long driven asunder,  
Breast to breast, like winds from opposing quarters,  
Rushed together. O singing of dead lovers !

And lo, it seemed that a great wave burst above  
us,

Drowning the ears with ringing, reverberant waters,

Blinding the eyes with the light of rapturous tears;  
And all the things that wound and the things that  
    sever,  
Corroding anger and bitter, remorseless years,  
    Were gone like smoke for ever.

## HYMN TO LOVE

LORD of all rapture and delight,  
Lord of all bitterness and tears,  
Who art the spirit's piercing sight,  
Who art the fire that burns and sears;

Why wilt thou turn thy hand to break  
Thy children groping in the dark,  
Whom thine atoning touch can make  
Kindle to spirit, spark to spark?

Ah, not for sport or careless lust  
Thou sett'st on some thy golden seal  
And flingest others in the dust,—  
Poor bodies crushed beneath the wheel.

But we, in bondage to thy nod,  
Know only when thine eyes are kind  
We walk in Paradise with God :  
Thou turnest, and we stumble blind

To cower 'neath Fate's relentless scorn  
With covered head and tortured breath,  
Or with a fortitude forlorn  
Fall on the sanctuary of Death.



## FOUR IMPRESSIONS



## GOLD

EVENING is tawny on the old  
    Deep-windowed farm,  
And the great elm-trees fold on fold  
    Are golden-warm,  
And a fountain-basin drips its gold  
    'Mid gleaming lawns  
Where mellow statue-bases hold  
    Their gilded fauns.

## FIREFLIES

STARS in the dark sky wake  
And through dark bars  
Of olive-trunks the fitful fireflies wink :  
Glassed in the dusky hollow of the lake  
Their dropping lanterns sink  
Among the still sheen of a thousand stars.

## MIST IN THE STREET

“THE quiet day has neither tears nor smile :  
Time halts and rests awhile.”

“Blurred in a mist of milky violet  
Material things are dreams.” “Is it evening yet ? ”  
“Not yet, it seems ; for when the hour is due  
Lamps will awaken in the deepening blue.”

## THE FESTIVAL

DANCING in the square.

In and out among the dancing fountains  
Flutter the bright shawls of a thousand dancers.

Dancing of boughs in the air.

Dancing of banners on their scarlet poles.  
And turbulent in their towers the dancing bells  
Make clamorous answers.

High into calm air rolls  
A hot and glittering noise. Its dying knells  
Freeze into silence in the dreaming mountains.

MISCELLANEOUS LYRICS





## THE RUNE OF LIFE

O WORLD of endless life,  
World of hurrying feet and ardent breath,  
Where bloom the deathless flowers of love and  
    strife,

And all things are but Death !  
Towards what unfolding mystery, what birth  
    Of ultimate fire,  
What perfect white creation, does this mirth  
And tragedy of growing life aspire ?

What unimaginable prize is sought  
That rocks of windy crags and mountain-crowns  
    And those that men have wrought  
To walls and pavements in their swarming towns,  
—That seem forever hushed to a charmed trance  
By the soft touch of sunlight and moonlight,—  
    Are each a whirling energy,  
A firmament that swarms with starry flight,

Toiling inexhaustibly  
Through the appointed ritual of its dance  
Towards this unknown destiny?

What wonder half revealed,  
What promise beckons from the sky's blue calms,  
That over every olive-yard and field  
Small eager lives lift upward-straining arms,  
Till all the southern leas  
Are alive and radiant with anemonies  
Burning, dancing, singing all together  
In the golden weather :  
And the wild cherry, when the sap leaps higher,  
Joyously, without fear,  
Bursts to a white foam of desire  
Upon the margin of the year?

What light was flashed from heaven's supremest  
spire  
That evermore along the winds of space  
The planets fling their fiery manes,  
Urging the everlasting race,  
Till on the white edge of the starry plains  
The comet of their one desire  
Receives them into universal fire?

How was this seed of blossoming rapture sown,  
This joy unshakable,  
Whereto men's souls vibrate as to a tone  
Struck from a golden bell?  
That (though their bodies waste and agonize,  
Though love departs and mortal beauty dies  
And all things perish in the stream of change),  
Strongly above this seeming ruin and dust  
Their seraph-winged imaginations range,  
And there, with more than hope, with more than  
trust,  
With certainty that lives like burning flame,  
Perceive that throbbing source from whence they  
came,  
Which with delight and song and golden laughter  
Builds up the universe from base to rafter  
To work its endless aim.

World of impassioned strife,  
O world of straining arms, aspiring wings !  
All this great muttered rune of life,  
Full of receding depth and rapturous height,  
Is but the music that the spirit sings ;

Out of all things that be  
Building its broad evolving symphony :  
Whose end we know not, for the light  
Blinds us, and the dull brain  
Flies not beyond the limit of its chain :  
Only the soul, aware,  
Laughs in its glee and asks not Whither nor Whence,  
Having its flower-like being in mere sense  
Of life and growth ; for spirit has no share  
In time and death, the children of despair.

## THE BALLAD OF THE SECOND EDEN

God, seeing men and women dare,  
Patient and proud, to face despair,  
Felt shame that the great choice he gave  
To those unproven by the grave.

He said, " I will, for heroes' sake,  
The noblest man and woman take :  
They who have looked on death and pain  
Shall make the awful choice again."

He spoke : the centuries were gone  
And all their offspring ; and alone  
The woman and the man stood there  
Breathing the Paradisal air.

Only to each did there remain  
The memory of all joy and pain  
That life about their ways had shed.  
Then God unto the woman said :

58 THE BALLAD OF THE SECOND EDEN

“Thou knowest life. Behold the tree  
Whence thy first parents plucked for thee  
All sorrow and all martyrdom  
And the deep joys that spring therefrom.

“Choose freely. If it be thy will,  
Keep Paradise unshattered still.”  
Then, hiding in the leafy ways,  
He watched them with a burning gaze.

But they, like saints that with calm breath  
Go smiling forth to talk with Death,  
Arose with brave, unflinching eyes  
To pluck the Apple of the Wise.

Then God, beholding they did eat,  
Came and knelt trembling at their feet.  
“Yours be the empery on high,  
For ye are greater souled than I.”

## NOT AT HOME

“CALLERS ! Good God, they’re coming up the drive.

Quick, the back door !

Our towels are in the passage.” “Man alive,

You’ve spilt the cigarettes upon the floor.”

And panic-stricken across the hall they fled ;

Slipped through the kitchen. “Save us, that’s their tread

Upon the gravel. Jane, the front-door bell !

We’re out.” “You naughty boys ’ll have me tell

More lies,—and to the vicar too ?” “No lie.

Behold, we’re gone.”

So off like hunted hares across the rye

And down their secret pathway to the wood,

Not daring even to breathe until they stood

Under green leaves alone !

Each saw his reflex wavering in the pool  
And felt the wind's touch cool  
Upon his shoulders, as he threw his coat  
Beside the broken boat.

Flinging their clothes away, they seemed to fling  
Propriety, convention, everything  
Clogging and irksome, after ;  
Felt in their hearts the old pagan glee revived  
And the play of dappling sunlight on their skin ;  
And naked, unimprisoned, full of laughter,  
White spirits cleansed from sin,  
They shouted loud, ran to the brink, and dived.

Then as they floated through the eddying swirls  
Slung lasso-like from the fall that hisses and foams  
Or sleeked to a brightness like the hair of girls,  
They saw through waving wreaths of beech and oak  
Blue deeps of heaven, and one laughed softly and  
spoke :

“ God save us from all callers and At Homes.”



## GHANIM THE MERCHANT

OVER the deserts golden beneath the noon,  
Urging the sloth of his cumbrous caravans  
Rode Ghanim, craving for his shadowy home  
In Araby—his palace of delight  
Where in the scented gardens he reclined  
Through the warm evenings when the petals fall,  
Strewing the ways like shells from tropic seas :  
For all the place was tranquil with the age  
Of cypresses whose glooming monoliths  
Pillared the dusk; and down the vista'd walks,  
Silvering many a violet interspace,  
Tall, slender shafts of fountains soothed the air  
With broken chattering. Lazily there he watched  
The supple dancers choose their steps and clink  
Gold ankle-rings and undulate their arms  
Like sluggish snakes : or closed his eyes until  
He felt the kindling tapestries of Heaven  
Burn their celestial colours across his brain ;

While coming Night that stars the cypress-tops  
Called flocks of soft-winged visions to increase  
His rich imaginings. So would he repose  
Alone after his wanderings and hold  
Silent communion with the thought of God.

## THE SATYR

SOFT falls the sunlight's dappled print  
    Upon the grass beneath the beeches  
In shining discs that dance and glint  
    About her feet : like ripening peaches

They glimmer through her muslin's folds  
    And gild the tangles of her hair,  
While in her listless hand she holds  
    A yellow rose and, dreaming there,

Still follows where her visions lead.  
    But to and fro behind her seat  
A satyr pipes upon his reed  
    A music so divinely sweet

That hearing it across her dreams  
    The tears grow starry in her eyes  
For nymphs that loved the wells and streams  
    And perished garden-deities.

## A SONG OF PARADISE

Under the smile  
Of crystal skies  
On a holy isle  
In Paradise,  
I watched the sails  
Of wingèd skiffs  
Where the blue sea pales  
Round dreaming cliffs ;

And here and there,  
Serenely swung  
In the flawless air,  
The white birds hung ;  
And round my feet  
And above my head,  
Clustering, sweet,  
The windflowers spread.

Then a grey wind over the water flew,  
And all the world was born anew;

For each swift boat  
With its small white wing  
Was the gliding note  
Of a viol-string;

And the birds that swung  
In the limpid air  
Were a carol sung;  
And the windflowers there  
Were the silver singing  
Of harp and horn,  
Carolling, ringing,  
Divinely borne  
Round and round  
In eddies of sound.

But while I listened,  
The sweet sounds glistened,  
Fluttered, and drooped in a magic calm,  
And, changed again by a heavenly charm,

Froze to the scents of a thousand roses,—  
Scents that hang like a mist divine  
When June with golden key uncloses  
Treasure of every garden-shrine.

\* \* \* \* \*

To vision that burns through form and show,  
To wisdom born of the Spirit, lo  
    All lovely things  
    Where God reposes—  
    Flowers and wings  
    And the scent of roses,  
Viol and horn and the harp-string's measure—  
All are the ghosts of the soul's deep pleasure.

Therefore I wrought  
By my soul's might  
God's golden thought  
To my own delight,  
There in the smile  
Of crystal skies  
On a holy isle  
In Paradise.

## THE FLOWERING CHERRY

BRING here no golden flagon  
With crimson wine of courage filled to the brim :  
Nor opal wine of dreams, in a goblet dim  
    With the coils of a jewelled dragon :  
Nor frosted silver cups of the pale wine of sleep :  
Nor tapering glasses of wine that is sly and merry :  
For I of a cool sweet well have drunken deep  
From a small white cup that dropped from the  
    flowering cherry.

## THE BEDCHAMBER

HANG up the tapestries of Sleep  
Whose heavy purple folds can drape  
Chambers round with visions deep,  
Woven with many a slumberous shape  
That moves through maze of drooping vines  
And slowly from each dusky grape  
Crushes the juice of drowsy wines.

Let a rushlight-star illumine  
The grim Madonna in her niche :  
Behold her, streaked with light and gloom,  
Scowling like an evil witch.  
Here shall spice, on embers spread,  
With slender shaft of smoke enrich  
All the gloom about the bed.



Open the windows to the lake  
And let the milky air unfurl  
Wings in the listening room to make  
Those shadows round the rushlight curl,  
And the woven shapes move on the wall  
Unsurely, and the smoke-stem swirl  
Slowly from the vertical.

## COBWEBS

Busy life within, without,  
Has no corner free for doubt.  
Busy life without, within,  
Has no loophole left for sin.  
But when stress of living ebbs  
Sin and doubt spin dusty webs;  
Till a hanging shroud disguise  
Even the blue of Paradise.

## THE SHADOW

HER loosened hair in auburn strands  
Flowed back : in both extended hands  
A bowl of yellow fruit she bore ;  
    And on the tall  
    Sun-whitened wall  
Her shadow hurried on before.

Her limbs across her fluttering veil  
Were clear and round and honey-pale  
And softer than the fruit she bore :  
    And on the wall  
    Her flitting small  
Grey shadow hurried on before.

## THE SECRET

You little thought that, as we lazed  
And talked of light, familiar things  
While sunset opened golden wings  
Until your Flemish mirror blazed

And pewter on your dresser there  
Was lustred with a rosy fleck,  
My spirit stood behind your chair  
And flung his arms about your neck

And laid his cheek upon your hair  
And drew slow fingers down your dress,  
Weeping because you would not share  
The burden of his loneliness.

## POPLARS

IN the pale evening by the silver lake  
Three poplars stood and shivered in the breeze  
Which, filtered through their light-hung leaves,  
    did make  
A sighing like the wash of wizard seas.

It seemed a spirit stirred among the trees,  
Mourning for ancient wrongs and griefs turned grey,  
The sound uprose and dropped by slow degrees,  
Uprose and dropped, but never died away.

Now, while the wind flickers my lamp and jars  
The loosened panes and buffets at the door  
And settling cinders drop behind the bars,  
I think of those grey poplars in the frore  
October midnight on the misty shore  
Ceaselessly sighing beneath the moving stars.

## NIGHT

O RECONCILIATION of the dark,  
Enfolding hills and forests, skies and seas,  
Cities and wildernesses; bringing sleep  
To all whom destiny allows to sleep!  
I, sleepless and content, lie still and drink  
This pause from all confusion, this respite  
Even from great endeavour, bathing my eyes  
In the deep umbrageous blue, drowning my ears  
Under the assuaging silence of the dark.  
For now, when human sounds are muted down  
And lost, like stones that sink into a pond,  
In deeps of silence; when material things,  
Robbed by the slow withdrawal of the light  
Of all dividing colour, merge to one  
Unsevered blue; the liberated sense  
Hears patient, untumultuous tides of power  
Stirring the ocean of eternal things  
Through life and death and beauty and decay,

In everlasting rhythm : whence the soul takes  
New stores of power and patience to endure  
In broad serenity the visitings  
Of good and evil seasons and all those  
Exultant pains and agonizing joys  
Which are the wave-crests of evolving life :  
And whence is drawn the wisdom to perceive  
That life and death are but the episodes  
Of one great blossoming that is to be.

## TO TIME

(*Autumn* 1914)

SOOTHER of sorrow, laying healing hands  
On tear-exhausted brow and broken heart,  
Restoring evermore with gentle art  
Hope's blinded sight, Love's mutilated wing,  
And desolation of war-stricken lands;  
Abolishing things evil, gathering  
With hands serene and sure  
All souls beloved and treasured, all things pure,  
Into the golden immortality  
Of life which thou createst ever new;

While we 'mid ruthless devastation view  
How through the mounting years unceasingly  
The slow untroubled process of the earth  
Still out of death brings soaring life to birth,



O steel our hearts to patience, so that while  
The reapers open many a golden aisle  
Among the standing wheat, our souls may  
dare  
Perceive the good to come from this despair.

THE END

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